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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/894,704	06/28/2001	Masao Noguchi	MAT-8158US	5140
23122	7590	07/16/2004	EXAMINER	
RATNERPRESTIA P O BOX 980 VALLEY FORGE, PA 19482-0980			FETSUGA, ROBERT M	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3751		
DATE MAILED: 07/16/2004				

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/894,704	NOGUCHI ET AL.
	Examiner Robert M. Fetsuga	Art Unit 3751

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 May 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 40-47, 50 and 52-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 42-47 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 40, 41, 50 and 52-55 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

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1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after a decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but before the filing of a Notice of Appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit or the commencement of a civil action. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114.

Applicant's submission filed on May 10, 2004 has been entered.

2. Claims 42-47 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b).

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the

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art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 40, 41, 50 and 52-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yoshida et al.

The Yoshida et al. (Yoshida) reference (Fig. 11) discloses a shower apparatus comprising: a main body 28 including a concave-shaped (side-side) cover (illustrated); a plurality of arms 47; and a plurality of spray nozzles 48, as claimed. The Yoshida arm supports 28A are capable of being used with a bather in the functionally recited manner.

5. Claims 40, 41, 50 and 52-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida.

Although the arms of the Fig. 11 embodiment of Yoshida may not be used with a bather, as claimed, attention is directed to the Fig. 31 embodiment thereof which discloses analogous arms 47. Therefore, in consideration of the Fig. 31 embodiment, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to associate relative bather positioning with the Fig. 11 embodiment in order to facilitate shower use.

6. Applicant is referred to MPEP 714.02 and 608.01(o) in responding to this Office action.

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7. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Robert M. Fetsuga at telephone number 703/308-1506 who can be most easily reached Monday through Thursday.



Robert M. Fetsuga
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3751